



Information To Improve the Selection and Use Of Foods In Your Home

Oranges—Winter's Favorite Fresh Fruit

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When the sun doesn't spend much time in the sky, it's nice to have some fiery-looking orbs in the kitchen. Fresh navel oranges taste like summer but are at their peak in the winter. Nutritious, delicious and beautiful, oranges are a pleasure of the season.

Choosing and storing

Oranges are picked ripe and ready to eat. Choose firm oranges that are heavy for their size, as heavier oranges have more juice inside. In general, smaller oranges are juicier than larger ones. Color is not a good indication of quality. Although the fruit changes from green to orange as it ripens, under certain growing conditions the ripe fruit will begin to turn green again—and may actually be sweeter than some fully orange fruit. Store oranges on the counter for 10 days to 2 weeks, or up to 3 weeks in the refrigerator. The peel protects the fruit and very little nutritional value is lost until the skin is cut.

Nutrition

Oranges are among Mother Nature's finest gifts. Just one navel orange will meet your entire day's requirements for vitamin C! If you eat an orange, you'll also be getting more than three grams of dietary fiber, including soluble fiber, as well as folate, potassium, calcium and magnesium. You won't use much of your calorie budget to get this either, because an orange has only a little more than 60 calories. Oranges also contain health-promoting flavonoids and terpenes, which appear to help fight off cancer.

Preparation

How easy can you get—just peel and eat! Navel oranges are so easy to peel that no knife is necessary, just stick a finger in the end and pull. To juice an orange, cut it crosswise. Room temperature oranges will provide more juice than cold ones. The juice of navel oranges can turn bitter on standing or heating, so squeeze them right before drinking. If you cook with navel oranges, add them at the last minute just to heat them.

Tips for using oranges

- Should you go for the juice or the whole fruit? The whole fruit has more fiber to fill you up and is chock full of nutrients. Juice is low in fiber, but it is high in folate, which may help prevent certain birth defects and lower homocysteine levels which helps lower the risk of heart attack.
- Oranges are wonderful in a salad. Enjoy a taste of sunshine today.

Source: www.foodandhealth.com

WORD WISE

Flavonoids

Researchers are discovering that vitamins and minerals are merely the tip of the nutritional iceberg. Perhaps the largest group of "other" nutrients are the flavonoids. Researchers have identified more than 4,000 of them in plants. The major dietary sources of flavonoids include fruit and fruit products. Studies have found that the flavonoids in these foods protect against heart disease and cancer.

Source: American Dietetic Association



ORANGE MINT RICE SALAD

Ingredients

3 oranges
3 cups cooked Brown Rice
1/3 cup raisins
1/3 cup chopped fresh mint leaves
1/2 cup chopped walnuts
Salt and pepper to taste



Directions: Peel and segment two oranges; set aside. Squeeze juice from remaining orange; set aside. In a large bowl, combine rice, orange segments, raisins, mint and walnuts. Add orange juice; toss well. Salt and pepper to taste. Refrigerate 30 minutes before serving.

For more rice salad recipe ideas, check http://www.usarice.com/recipe/recipe_search.cgi/1/

Source: lancaster.unl.edu

STEPS TO NUTRITION AND HEALTH

Take steps towards better nutrition and health. It is never too late to make a change for the better. Make smart choices at every meal and do something each day to be more active. Here are the food groups that provide you the right nutrients each day.



Grains: Did you know that at least half (or about three) of the servings of grains you eat each day should be whole grains? Whole grains include all parts of the grain kernel (germ, bran and endosperm), not just the white flour that is in most foods today. Oatmeal, brown rice, barley and 100 percent whole wheat products are a few examples of whole grains.

Vegetables: Most people do not eat enough vegetables daily, especially dark green or orange veggies. If you can eat one large salad at lunch plus a few vegetables at dinner and for snacks, you are stepping in the right direction.

Fruits: Think fresh whole fruit and get a variety each day. Start with fruit for breakfast and end with fruit for dessert. Take fruit with you for snacking, too!

Milk/Dairy: Most people need to drink about three glasses of skim milk each day or get the equivalent with yogurt. Dairy foods that are low in sodium and fat yet high in calcium are the right choice.

Meat/Beans: If you are like most Americans, you probably get more than enough protein; you just don't get enough variety or keep it low in saturated fat. Start integrating beans/legumes, fish and nuts in your diet—especially if they take the place of meat.

Step More, Sit Less: Being more active and less sedentary helps you control weight and lower your risk for many chronic diseases. Did you know that cleaning the house instead of watching TV burns twice the calories? In addition to being more active, try to get about 30 to 60 minutes of exercise, like brisk walking each day.

Visit mypyramid.gov to obtain more information about MyPyramid and to find out what is right for you based on your sex, age and activity level.

Source: www.mypyramid.gov

CHECK THE LABEL

High Vitamin C Foods

Eating plenty of fruits and vegetables every day will make it easier to meet your vitamin C requirements. Vitamin C helps build and repair cartilage and bones.

Source: Hope Health Letter November 2006

Serving Size: 8 fl oz • 240 mL	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 120	Calories from Fat 0
	% DV
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 0g	
Monounsaturated Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 27g	9%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 22g	
Protein 1g	2%
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 100%
Calcium 2%	Iron 0%
Unofficial Pts: 2	
DietFacts.com	
Percent of Calories from:	
Fat-0%	Carb-90%
	Protein-3.3%

** HOLIDAY TABLE DONE LIGHT

- Keep your mashed potatoes “skinny” by using skim milk instead of whole milk or cream. Instead of adding butter, add a shake or two of parmesan cheese along with pepper to taste.
- Instead of serving two starches, e.g., mashed potatoes and stuffing, serve only one starch and two veggie side dishes such as holiday tossed salad, green beans, mixed steamed vegetables, carrots or turnips.
- Crushed gingerbread cookie crumbs make an excellent top crust for fruit pies (leave out the bottom crust) or bottom crust for pumpkin pies.



Source: Food & Health Communications

Roasting Those "Other" Holiday Meats



No doubt about it, holiday time is turkey time. Of the 266 million turkeys produced in 2006, 30 percent are served during the holidays. Yet numerous other meats are also traditional at holiday gatherings. Some families choose a rib roast; others, a ham; and some will have the butcher arrange a crown roast of lamb.

Whatever the choice, have a food thermometer on hand to determine when the meat has reached a safe temperature for special holiday meals, the cook wants everything perfect and perfectly safe.

The Safety of Special Holiday Meats

When choosing your holiday meat, be assured that all beef, lamb, pork, veal and poultry sold at your supermarket have been inspected for wholesomeness by the USDA or State inspection systems. Once your purchase is at home, refrigerate it immediately. Cook or freeze fresh poultry within 1 or 2 days; fresh meats, 3 to 5 days.

There are two types of hams: fully cooked and those that need cooking. Fully cooked hams may be eaten cold or reheated to 140°F. When storing these hams, observe "use by" dates on hams sealed at the plant; use store-wrapped cooked ham portions within 3 to 5 days.

"Cook-before-eating" hams must be cooked to 160°F to destroy harmful bacteria that may be present. Use within 7 days.



About Roasting

Because holidays are special times, people tend to spend more money for a specialty meat. These fancy meats and poultry may cost more because they are exceptionally tender or special.



Roasting is the recommended method for cooking tender meats. To roast, meat is placed on a rack in a shallow, uncovered pan and is cooked by the indirect dry heat of an oven. To keep the meat tender and minimize shrinkage due to the evaporation of moisture, a moderately low oven temperature of 325°F should be used. The USDA does not recommend cooking meat and poultry at oven temperatures lower than 325°F because these foods could remain in the "Danger Zone" (temperatures of 40° to 140°F) too long. Bacteria which may be present on these foods multiply rapidly at these temperatures.

Source: www.fsis.usda.gov

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